

ABSTRACT

5 The present invention provides systems and methods for
electronic commerce including secure transaction management
and electronic rights protection. Electronic appliances such as
computers employed in accordance with the present invention
help to ensure that information is accessed and used only in
authorized ways, and maintain the integrity, availability, and/or
confidentiality of the information. Secure subsystems used with
10 such electronic appliances provide a distributed virtual
distribution environment (VDE) that may enforce a secure chain
of handling and control, for example, to control and/or meter or
otherwise monitor use of electronically stored or disseminated
information. Such a virtual distribution environment may be
15 used to protect rights of various participants in electronic
commerce and other electronic or electronic-facilitated
transactions. Secure distributed and other operating system
environments and architectures, employing, for example, secure
semiconductor processing arrangements that may establish
20 secure, protected environments at each node. These techniques
may be used to support an end-to-end electronic information
distribution capability that may be used, for example, utilizing
the "electronic highway."